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data to the external programmable device, modify the overhead data, and receive the modified overhead data from the external programmable device. --

-- 12. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the logic circuit is further configured to store payload data of the frame in a data structure for an amount of time based upon times to send the extracted overhead data to the external programmable device, modify the overhead data, and receive the modified overhead data from the external programmable device. --

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-- 14. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the amount of time payload data of the frame is stored in a data structure is approximately equal to a total amount of time spent extracting, modifying and inserting the overhead data. --

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-- 17. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the logic circuit is further configured to store payload data of the frame in a data structure for an amount of time based upon times to send the extracted overhead data to the external programmable device, modify the overhead data, and receive the modified overhead data from the external programmable device. --

-- 18. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the amount of time payload data of the frame is stored in a data structure is approximately equal to a total amount of time spent extracting, modifying and inserting the overhead data. --

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-- 21. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein the network processor is further configured to store payload data of the frame in a data structure for an amount of time based upon times to send the extracted overhead data to the external programmable device, modify the overhead data, and receive the modified overhead data from the external programmable device. --

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-- 22. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the amount of time payload data of the frame is stored in a data structure is approximately equal to a total amount of time spent extracting, modifying and inserting the overhead data. --

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-- 25. (Amended) The system of claim 24 wherein the logic circuit is further configured to store payload data of the frame in a data structure for an amount of time based upon times to send the extracted overhead data to the external programmable device, modify the overhead data, and receive the modified overhead data from the external programmable device. --

-- 26. (Amended) The system of claim 24 wherein the amount of time payload data of the frame is stored in a data structure is approximately equal to a total amount of time spent extracting, modifying and inserting the overhead data. --

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-- 29. (Amended) The article of claim 28 further storing instructions that, when applied to a computer system, cause the computer system to:

store payload data of the frame in a data structure for an amount of time based upon times to send the extracted overhead data to the external programmable device, modify the overhead data in an external programmable device, and receive the modified overhead data from the external programmable device. --

-- 30. (Amended) The article of claim 28 including adjusting at least one of the times for extracting, storing, modifying and inserting wherein the amount of time the payload data of the frame is stored in a data structure is approximately equal to a total amount of time spent extracting, modifying and inserting the overhead data. --

Please add the following new claims:

-- 31. A method comprising:
extracting overhead data from a frame;
sending the extracted overhead data to be modified;
receiving the modified overhead data; and
inserting the modified overhead data into said frame. --

-- 32. The method of claim 31 wherein at least some bits of the extracted overhead data are modified. --

-- 33. The method of claim 31 further comprising storing payload data of the frame in a data structure for an amount of time based upon times to send the extracted overhead data to be modified and receive the modified overhead data. --

-- 34. The method of claim 33 including performing said extracting, storing, and inserting in a pipelined manner. --

-- 35. The method of claim 33 comprising performing said extracting, sending, receiving, and inserting for another frame and including receiving the modified extracted overhead data of the one frame according to a network state different from a network state used to receive the modified extracted overhead data of the other frame. --

-- 36. The method of claim 33 wherein the amount of time payload data of the frame is stored in a data structure is approximately equal to a total amount of time spent extracting the unmodified overhead data and inserting the modified overhead data. --

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-- 37. The method of claim 36 including adjusting at least one of the times for extracting the overhead data to be modified, storing the payload data, and inserting modified overhead data. --
